



# Whitehall City Schools



## History

The City of Whitehall, Ohio, is located in Truro Township in Franklin County in the center of its eastern border. Truro was settled in 1805, later to be organized and named in 1810. The name Truro came from one of the original settlers in the township, the Taylor family. The Taylor family migrated from the Truro Township in Nova Scotia. Much of the area in and around the township was marked for refugees from Nova Scotia. Later, the unclaimed areas were granted to veterans of the War of 1812.

The first school in the township was in a log cabin on the east bank of the Big Walnut Creek, just south of where Livingston Road crosses it. Today, Livingston Avenue crosses the Big Walnut a short distance north of where Livingston Road reportedly crossed it. This would place the cabin on the other side of the creek from the southern border of Walnut Ridge High School.

The first teacher in the school was a man known as Mr. McAfferty (no first name could be found). He started teaching classes in 1820. Before this time, children of Truro Township would have had to go to a school on Alum Creek, in Montgomery Township.

Truro Township was essentially a rural area consisting mainly of farmland. By 1925, Truro had eight one-room schoolhouses around the township forming the school district. Most of the one-room schoolhouses had a classroom size of about thirty students. The city of Reynoldsburg had already established its own school district at that time.

The population of the area was gradually growing. The Columbus Depot was established in 1918. Norton Airfield was established in 1925. As the area grew, the population of Columbus began moving out to Truro Township. The school district soon realized it would have to build new schools to handle the increasing number of students. In addition, laws were being passed making attendance in school mandatory.

The school district established a bond issue to pay for the building of three new schools. One of the largest advantages of these new schools would be multiple classrooms. Thus, students of different ages could be separated and taught at their appropriate grade levels.

The smallest of the three new schools was Courtright Avenue School. The school was located on Courtright Avenue, one mile south of Livingston Avenue. The school started out as a four-room school. Later, a gymnasium and other classrooms were added. The school is still standing today. After Whitehall became a city, the school was transferred to the Columbus School District who later sold the building.

In the northern part of the school district, the East Broad Street school was built. It was located on East Broad Street one quarter of a mile west of Yearling Road. Since the population was higher in this area, the school was equipped with eight classrooms. Once again, the gymnasium and other classrooms were added at a later date. The school was sold in 1968 and later demolished so apartments could be built.

A third new school was the White Hall School which later became known as East Main Street School. This building was located on East Main Street (the National Road) three quarters of a mile west of Yearling Road. It was built next to one of the aforementioned one-room schoolhouses. After it was built the old one-room schoolhouse was torn down. Like the East Broad Street School, this school had eight classrooms.

The reason the school was called the White Hall School, instead of the East Main Street School, was because of the building that was almost directly across the street from the school. The white building with the widow's wall porch on the front was the White Hall Tavern. This establishment was a stage coach stop along the National Road. It was also the original farmhouse for the White Hall farm and was built in 1806. Later, it became known as "Ye Olde White Hall Inn", a motor lodging establishment along Route 40. As most of the establishments in the area at that time had "White Hall" in their name, the school was named "White Hall School." However, the Village of Whitehall would not be established for another two decades.

After many additions to the White Hall School (or East Main Street School), the school looks as it does below. The school is still standing today but is no longer a public school.

The three new schools only taught children in the first through the eighth grades. This was because the area was still mainly rural. The students were needed to work on the farms, so, for the most part, they did not continue their educations past eighth grade. Those who were fortunate enough to be able to continue their education went to Bexley High School. Some years later, Bexley High School became too crowded. The students then had to go to Reynoldsburg or South High Schools.

Whitehall became a village in 1947 and was designated a city in 1950. The name Whitehall again came from the "White Hall Tavern" which was a landmark in the area. The city founders decided to make the name all one word instead of dividing it. With the incorporation of the city, the Whitehall School District was formally established.

In 1954, Whitehall-Yearling High School admitted its first students. Work on the school was still going on while classes were in session. Classrooms were filled as they were completed. The graduating class of 1959, was the first class that was able to receive all twelve years of schooling in Whitehall.

Whitehall-Yearling High School quickly distinguished itself in many areas. The 1960 Whitehall-Yearling High School Band is shown below. The fine arts continues to be one of the outstanding programs of the Whitehall City Schools.

By the 1968, Whitehall School District had built the last of its current schools. Robinwood School replaced the East Broad Street School. The Whitehall School System had five elementary schools (Beechwood, Etna Road, Kae Avenue, Robinwood, and East Main Street); one Junior High School (Rosemore); and one High School (Whitehall Yearling). Currently three of the elementary schools are in use (Beechwood, Etna Road, and Kae Avenue). In 1966, a bond issue was established to build the Eastland Vocational Center which actually opened in 1968. Fourteen school districts were offered the opportunity to help establish this Vocational Center. Only five districts (Canal Winchester, Gahanna, Groveport, Reynoldsburg, and Whitehall) decided to participate in the project at that time. Groveport donated forty acres for the building. In the early years of the vocational center, the acreage at the back of the center was used by the students in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) or leased out to local farmers. Today, all of the original fourteen school districts are members of what is now called the Eastland/Fairfield Career and Technical Centers along with many other districts.